

Who Is Jesus?

Week 3: Jesus is our Friend

Welcome Question

“What makes someone a good friend?”

Introduction

Hi everyone! We are into our third week of our series called “Who is Jesus?” For the past two weeks, we’ve all become detectives investigating who Jesus really is. Our first case was learning about Jesus as a healer and last week we learned about Jesus as teacher. Does anyone know what we’ll learn about Jesus this week? Our welcome question asked, ““What makes someone a good friend?” Let’s go over your answers now. *(go over answers written)* If you haven’t guessed it already, today we’ll be learning about Jesus as our FRIEND. Jesus was the greatest example of a friend we could ever have. Let’s open our case files and see what we can discover about Jesus being a friend.

Large Group Lesson

This is Case #197, the Friend. I have four witness accounts of Jesus being a Friend. Today, we’re going to divide into four groups and go over our evidence. It’s your job to ask the tough questions: Who? Why? When? And then report your findings to the group. This might involve you getting a little creative. Are you up to the challenge?

Jesus’ Friendship Case Studies

Pass out manila folders marked “evidence” for each grade. Each small group will use their file to study scripture related to Jesus’ friendships. Give the groups time to complete their study, then bring them back for a long group recap. (if time permits, they will complete their Bible challenge at the end).

K-1: Friend to Children, Luke 18:15-17

1-2: Friend to a Tax Collector, Luke 19:1-10

3rd: Friend to a Woman, John 4:1-15

4th: Friend to a Dead Man, John 11: 1-16, 28-44

Recap Discussion:

Allow each group to come together and share the findings from their investigations, then wrap-up the lesson.

Today, we learned a lot about who Jesus is: a friend. Jesus taught us the most important part about being a friend: LOVE. In each of our stories, we see that Jesus loved the person He was friends with. Jesus also offered them something: Life. He loved them so much that

He came to earth to give His own life, so they could have eternal LIFE with God forever. John 10:10 says, *“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”* The last part of Jesus friendship was that He was a friend to ALL: sinners, tax collectors, women and children; everyone! Jesus came to love and give life to everyone.

So how do we become a friend like Jesus? Jesus tells us in John 15:14, *“You are my friends if you do what I command you.”* The first thing we need to be a good friend is obey the ultimate friend, Jesus. He showed us HOW to be a friend and we need to follow His example: Love others and tell them about Jesus. The greatest gift we can give our others, is telling them that Jesus loves them and came to earth to die on a cross for them, so they could be in Heaven with God forever. What’s a better gift than that!?

Closing

It looks like we’ve learned a lot about Jesus as a friend. Our investigation of *“Who is Jesus?”* will continue next week. I hope to see all of you super sleuths here to help carry out our mission. Let’s pray.

If time remains, dismiss back to small groups for Bible Challenge. If no time remains, pass out verse cards.

Case #197
Evidence #1
Friend to Children

Name of Witness: Luke

Personal Testimony of Witness:

15 Now they were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them. And when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. **16** But Jesus called them to him, saying, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. **17** Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it." **Luke 18:15-17**

Evidence Report:

Who is Jesus a friend to? _____

Who didn't want the children near Jesus? _____

Why did the disciples not want the children by Jesus?

Why was Jesus a friend to children? _____

Who does the kingdom of God belong to? _____

In what ways does this tell us how we should be a friend to others? _____

Take a few minutes to go over your report. Plan to share your findings with the group. You can act out the story, draw the story or come up with another way to share what you've learned with the group.

Case #197
Evidence #2
Friend to a Tax Collector

Name of Witness: Luke

Personal Testimony of Witness:

19 He entered Jericho and was passing through. **2** And behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich. **3** And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small in stature. **4** So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way. **5** And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today." **6** So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully. **7** And when they saw it, they all grumbled, "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." **8** And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have frauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold." **9** And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. **10** For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." **Luke 19:1-10**

Evidence Report:

Who is Jesus a friend to? _____

Who didn't want Jesus to be friend with Zacchaeus?

Why didn't people like Zacchaeus?

Why was Jesus a friend to Zacchaeus?

What does Zacchaeus promise to do?

Who does Jesus say He came? _____

In what ways does this tell us how we should be a friend to others? _____

Take a few minutes to go over your report. Plan to share your findings with the group. You can act out the story, draw the story or come up with another way to share what you've learned with the group.

Case #197
Evidence #3
Friend to a Woman

Name of Witness: John

Personal Testimony of Witness:

Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John **2** (although Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples), **3** he left Judea and departed again for Galilee. **4** And he had to pass through Samaria. **5** So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. **6** Jacob's well was there; so Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour.

7 A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."**8** (For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.) **9** The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) **10** Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." **11** The woman said to him, "Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? **12** Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock." **13** Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, **14** but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." **15** The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water." John 4:1-15

Evidence Report:

Who is Jesus a friend to? _____

Why would Jesus and the Samaritan woman not be friends?

What did Jesus offer the woman?

What does the woman think Jesus is trying to give her?

Who did Jesus come to earth for?

Who should we tell about Jesus? _____

In what ways does this tell us how we should be a friend to others? _____

Take a few minutes to go over your report. Plan to share your findings with the group. You can act out the story, draw the story or come up with another way to share what you've learned with the group.

Case #197
Evidence #4
Friend to a Dead Man

Name of Witness: John

Personal Testimony of Witness:

11 After saying these things, he said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him." **12** The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover." **13** Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he meant taking rest in sleep. **14** Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus has died,**15** and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." **16** So Thomas, called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

Jesus Weeps

28 When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in private, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you." **29** And when she heard it, she rose quickly and went to him. **30** Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha had met him. **31** When the Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary rise quickly and go out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there. **32** Now when Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet, saying to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." **33** When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled. **34** And he said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." **35** Jesus wept. **36** So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" **37** But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man also have kept this man from dying?"

Jesus Raises Lazarus

38 Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. **39** Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead four

days." **40** Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?" **41** So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. **42** I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me." **43** When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out." **44** The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go." **John 11 11-16, 28-44**

Evidence Report:

Who is Jesus a friend to? _____

What happened to Lazarus? _____

How did Jesus respond when Mary told him about Lazarus?

What was Jesus' plan for Lazarus the whole time?

What did Jesus do at the cave/tomb?

Why did Jesus raise Lazarus? _____

In what ways does this tell us how we should be a friend to others? _____

Take a few minutes to go over your report. Plan to share your findings with the group. You can act out the story, draw the story or come up with another way to share what you've learned with the group.

Who is Jesus? Week 3 Bible Challenge

(Bible Challenge will only be completed if time remains after large group recap)

This week's Memory Verse:

"You are my friends if you do what I command you." John 15:14

Last week's verse: "Jesus answered them, "My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me."
John 7:16

Go over this week's verse. Say it together a few times. Then transition into the Bible Challenge activity.

Match that Memory Verse!

Supplies: Memory Verse Match Cards.

Each small group will have a set of verse cards. There are two cards per word in the memory verse. Lay all cards face down and spread out. Each child will take turns flipping over two cards to make a match. If they don't match, turn the cards back over and move to the next child. When they get a match, put the cards to the side. At the end of the game, after all cards have been matched, put the verse in the correct order.

Prayer: Ask children if they have any prayer needs and then close in prayer.